

March 9, 2022

Dear Distinguished Members of the Housing Committee,

My name is Peter Millman and I represent Eastern Connecticut Green Action. I also sit on the Board of Directors of People's Action for Clean Energy. I want to speak in support of **SB-292, an Act Concerning Heating Efficiency in New Construction and Major Alterations of Residential Buildings**.

In 2006, President George Bush said "America is addicted to oil". We are also addicted to natural gas. Like all addictions, it is really hard to break the habit. Like all habits, it's easy to find excuses for putting off the day when you make a change.

But the time has come when we need to start cutting back our use of natural gas and oil for heating. This bill is a modest, gradual beginning, because it only applies to new construction or major residential alterations. In the progression from crawling to walking to running, this barely gets us out of the crawling phase in our necessary move away from fossil fuels.

Continuing our addiction to burning fossil fuels to heat homes and cook food condemns us to a worse climate future, worse health outcomes for people in homes and apartments, dramatic price fluctuations for oil and gas, and higher energy bills for residents and businesses. Newer technologies such as heat pumps are cleaner, healthier and cheaper due to higher efficiency.

Opposition to this bill, which will likely come from existing businesses that sell fossil fuels and the equipment that burns those fuels, is understandable, but should not determine whether it passes or fails. The transition to electrified heating already presents massive opportunities for existing businesses and will continue to even more as time progresses. Many, if not most, local companies that currently sell oil and gas heating equipment already install heat pumps when asked by customers.

We can do this. We can end our addiction to fossil fuels, and the businesses, engineers, builders, contractors and regulators, who are used to our existing system will learn how to adapt, and very likely do so to their own benefit. Please pass this legislation and then move on to the next stage of transitioning to a clean energy economy. We need to do this. As Bill McKibben has said, "Winning slowly is the same as losing".

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